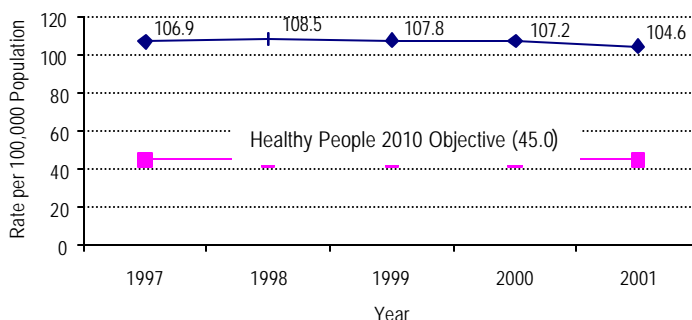


What is the magnitude of the problem?

Diabetes is a disease characterized by high levels of blood sugar, which can be a result of problems with insulin production, insulin action, or both. There are three major types of diabetes, Type 1, Type 2, and Gestational diabetes. Based on the 2000 estimates, 17 million people or 6.2% of the US population have diabetes. Among the US people age 65 and older, it was estimated that 20% have diabetes. According to the Arizona BRFSS (2001), approximately 5.7% of all adults have diabetes. For persons age 65 or older approximately 21% of all people in this age group have diabetes. Diabetes related death rates for this age group has slightly declined since 1998 however the death rates are considerably greater than the Healthy Arizona 2010 Objective of 45.0 per 100,000 persons.

Death Rate for Diabetes Among Older Adults (65 years and older), Arizona



Source: *Arizona Health Status and Vital Statistics, Arizona, 1997-2001*

What is the cost?

During 2001 in Arizona there were 2,641 hospitalizations related to diabetes for older adults. The average length of stay was approximately 5 days with an average cost of \$18,838 per hospitalization. The maximum expenditure for all hospitalizations related to diabetes was approximately \$50 million. Hospitalization data are from state hospitals only; federal facilities (Veterans Affairs and Indian Health Services) are not included.

What are the complications?

Diabetes is associated with serious complications and premature death. Diabetes related complications include heart disease, stroke, vision loss or blindness, kidney disease, high blood pressure, nervous system disease, amputations, and dental disease.

What will decrease the risk of developing diabetes or its complications?

Prevention of diabetes is essential. Some risk factors include a family history of diabetes, obesity, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol. People at risk for diabetes can take steps to prevent its onset. Studies have shown that lifestyle changes can prevent or delay the onset of Type 2 diabetes. The following are suggestions for preventing diabetes.

- Start and maintain a regular exercise program consisting of moderate level physical activity for at least 30 minutes 3 times a week (minimum)
- Maintain a healthful weight
- Reduce intake of dietary fat
- Eat at least five daily servings of fruits and vegetables
- Smoking cessation
- Control glucose level, blood pressure, and blood lipid level

Control of diabetes is also essential. People with diabetes can take steps to control the disease and its complications. The following are recommended tests/screenings to reduce the risk of developing complications.

- A1C test at least 2 times a year
- Dilated eye exam once a year
- Comprehensive foot exam at least once a year
- Lipid profile and micro albumin measurement once a year (if indicated).
- Blood pressure and weight check each regular diabetes visit.

To learn about Healthy Aging 2010, please contact Ramona Rusinak at (602) 542-1223 or visit the Healthy Aging 2010 website at <http://www.hs.state.az.us/phs/healthyaging2010>.